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| AUTHORITY | |
| 31 Jan 1978, Group 4, DoDD 5200.10; AGO D/A ltr dtd 29 Apr 1980 | |

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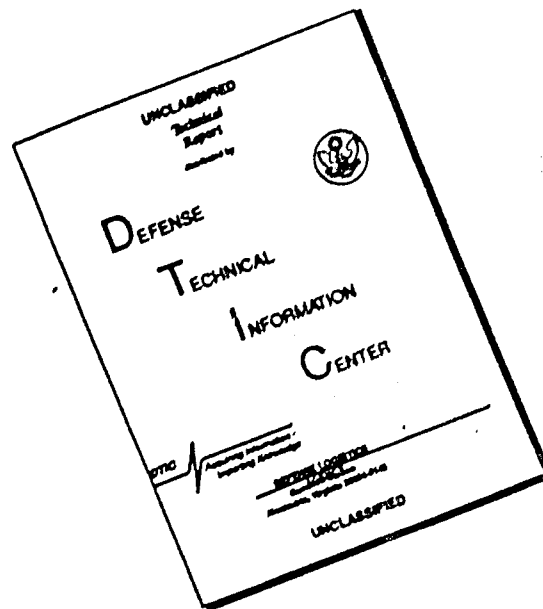
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⑥ Lessons Learned, HEADQUARTERS,
145TH AVIATION BATTALION (U.S.) ⑧

AVAW-FC

11 14 January 1966

SUBJECT: Command Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 December 1965.

12/15p.

TO: Commander in Chief
U.S. Army Pacific

APC U.S. Forces 96558

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SECTION I: SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATION OR UNIT ACTIVITIES:

1. (U) This report covers the period 1 October through 31 December
1965, and is submitted in accordance with AR 525-24, 29 October 1959.
Activities of subordinate units are included in this report.

2. (C) MISSION:

18 OACSFOR

19 CT-RD-650119

To augment, within the Rules of Engagement, the aviation
capability of the First United States Infantry Division and the Republic
of Vietnam Forces operating in the III Corps area.

3. (C) ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:

a. The 145th Aviation Battalion is organized with a Headquarters
and Headquarters Detachment, six Aviation Companies (four Airmobile Light
Companies, one Armed Helicopter Company, one Airplane Surveillance Company
Light), one Airlift Platoon, and supporting Transportation Maintenance,
Medical, and Signal Avionics Detachments.

b. Three of the five aviation companies (airmobile light),
(68th, 118th, A/501st) and the 6th Airlift Platoon, provide ARVN III Corps
with normal command and liaison missions (commonly called single ship
missions) and furnish the Battalion air lift capability for combat assaults.
The 6th Airlift Platoon is attached to Company A, 501st Aviation Battalion.
The 120th Aviation Company (AMC), although assigned to the 145th Aviation
Battalion, provides aircraft to Headquarters, United States Military
Assistance Command, Vietnam, for administrative, command, and liaison
missions. In addition when required, they also provide troop carriers and
armed aircraft for Battalion airmobile operations. The 197th Aviation
Company (Armed Hcptr) is authorized 25 armed aircraft, no troop carriers,
and provides the Battalion with the majority of its armed helicopter support.
In addition, one armed platoon of the 197th Aviation Company is on TDY to
the II ARVN Corps area to augment the armed helicopter support of the FIV
363 Marine Helicopter Squadron located at Qui Nhon. The 74th Aviation

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Company (Airplane Surveillance Light) furnishes aircraft for aerial surveillance, radio relay, and weather advisories to the Battalion for airmobile operations, and to the ARVN Divisions for reconnaissance and artillery adjustment during ground tactical operations. In addition the 173rd (US) Airborne Brigade and the 1st (US) Infantry Division have requested, and received support during ground tactical operations from this company.

4. (C) Type and number of aircraft assigned to the Battalion:

| <u>TYPE</u> | <u>NUMBER</u> |
|-------------|---------------|
| UH-1B | 27 |
| UH-1B (A) | 59 |
| UH-1D | 49 |
| O-1F | 22 |
| U-6A | 1 |

5. (C) Operation Statistics for the Quarter.

a. Number of aircraft hours flown by Company and total for Battalion.

| | <u>OCTOBER</u> | <u>NOVEMBER</u> | <u>DECEMBER</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 68th Aviation Company (APT) | Not Assigned | Not Operational | 1360 | 1360 |
| 74th Aviation Company (ASL) | 2309 | 1902 | 2081 | 6292 |
| 118th Aviation Company (APT) | 2022 | 2063 | 1557 | 5642 |
| 120th Aviation Company (AML) | 1384 | 1379 | 1115 | 3878 |
| 197th Aviation Company (Armed) | 790 | 1323 | 804 | 2917 |
| A/501st Aviation Battalion (AML) | 2085 | 1962 | 1945 | 5992 |
| Total | 8590 | 8629 | 8862 | 26,081 |

b. Total number of sorties flown by the 145th Aviation Battalion during the quarter:

45,369

c. Number of Battalion size operations conducted by the 145th Aviation Battalion during the quarter:

| <u>OCTOBER</u> | <u>NOVEMBER</u> | <u>DECEMBER</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 19 | 10 | 13 | 42 |

d. Number of troops and passengers lifted during the quarter:

| | <u>OCTOBER</u> | <u>NOVEMBER</u> | <u>DECEMBER</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Troops | 8015 | 7244 | 5197 | 20,456 |
| Passengers | 20,555 | 13,471 | 14,785 | 48,811 |
| Total | 28,570 | 20,715 | 19,982 | 69,267 |

6. (U) Number of days engaged in training and Combat Operations during the quarter: 92.

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7. (U) Training Subjects Stressed:

Although this Battalion is committed in combat, the following training was accomplished during the quarter:

- a. Armed helicopter transition, escort, and suppressive fire tactics and techniques.
- b. Night flying training to include platoon and company size formation flying, take off, and landings.
- c. Aviator Standardization Training.
- d. Instrument Training.
- e. Decca Navigation.
- f. External Loads Training.
- g. Familiarization Firing with Crew served and Individual Weapons.
- h. CBR Refresher.
- i. Code of Conduct.

8. (U) Brief Summary of Major Tactical Operation.

a. The 173rd (US) Airborne Brigade and the ARVN 10th Infantry Division were assigned a tactical area of responsibility in the Rice Bowl, vicinity of Vo Dat and Thanh Binh, Binh Tuy Province, Republic of Vietnam. Their mission and objective was to reestablish Government influence in an area which had been under Viet Cong control, and to protect the local population while the 1965 rice crop was being harvested, stored and marketed.

b. The 145th Aviation Battalion provided air movement, armed escort, radio relay, aerial surveillance, and continuous armed overhead cover in support of the 173rd (US) Airborne Brigade and 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (2,058 troops) and the 10th ARVN Infantry Division (1,750 troops) airmobile assault's into the operational area on 21 and 25 November 1965. The forward positioning technique of placing one half of the assault forces in a forward staging area prior to the main airmobile assault was used during this operation in order to reduce turn around time while reinforcing the initial assault forces admitted into the combat area. Light small arms and automatic weapons fire was received during each airmobile assault; however, only one aircraft received hits and no casualties were reported. Supporting this operation, 52 troop carriers and 28 armed aircraft flew a total of 1,167.9 hours and 2,602 combat sorties.

9. (U) Detailed Description of Significant Operations or Events.

a. 19 October 1965: The 145th Aviation Battalion conducted an air landed assault with the 5th US Special Forces Group (Abn) and the Vietnamese Special Forces Detachment, C-3, beginning 19 October 1965. Approximately 378 troops were air lifted with two flight elements into the

landing zone, located at coordinates XT 589277, in two assaults. The first flight element departed the Bien Hoa staging area at 0825 hours with the second flight element departing immediately thereafter. A one minute interval between flight elements was maintained. The flight elements landed in the landing zone at 0905 hours, receiving light small arms and automatic weapons fire. Numerous prepared anti-aircraft positions and trenches were used by the Viet Cong to place hostile fire on aircraft approaching and departing the landing zone. Approach and departure routes were adjusted on subsequent lifts to avoid hostile fire. The second lift departed the Bien Hoa staging area at 0952 hours and landed in the LZ at 1020 hours. No hostile fire was received by either flight element during this lift and all aircraft returned to the staging area at 1040 hours for refueling. The troop carriers and armed aircraft remained on a 10 minute runway alert at Bien Hoa for extraction of the force on order. At 1610 hours the Battalion was alerted to begin the extraction. One hundred and ninety-two troops were extracted from a landing zone located at coordinates XT 587216, to an intermediate position at Trung Lap. The remaining troops were extracted on the second and final lift and taken directly to Bien Hoa. Flight elements then returned to Trung Lap and completed the last stage of extraction to Bien Hoa. The extraction of troops during this operation was unique in that a secured intermediate position at Trung Lap was used for initial extraction of one half of the force while the latter one half were flown all the way to their final destination. Extraction in this manner enabled all troops and aircraft to be clear of the operational area within fifteen minutes after the extraction began. This reduces the overall time to a minimum that friendly troops are left in hostile territory. This operation was conducted in the Bo Loi Forest.

b. 5 November 1965: The 145th Aviation Battalion provided troop carriers and armed escort support to the 173rd (US) Airborne Brigade and 1st Battalion Royal Australian Regiment airmobile assault into two landing zones, 18 Km northeast of Bien Hoa, RVN. The airmobile operation was complete at 1205 hours without incident. On 9 November 1965 at 1330 hours the 145th Aviation Battalion began extraction of the 173rd (US) Airborne Brigade and the 1st Battalion Royal Australian Regiment from their tactical area of responsibility located in the southwest corner of War Zone "D" 18 Km northeast of Bien Hoa, RVN. Due to the dispersion of individual units several extraction sites were required. Demonstrating the flexibility of the helicopter, a jungle road selected by the ground commander was used as an extraction site (coordinates YT 110337). Several trees were blown or cut down to make the area large enough to accept at least three aircraft at a time. During this extraction one helicopter's blade struck a tree during take off and was so badly damaged that the aircraft settled back into the pick up site. Realizing the time that would be lost during the replacement of the damaged blade, the Command and Control Group in the Command and Control helicopter diverted the lift forces to begin the extraction of the 1st Battalion Royal Australian Regiment from another preselected landing zone at coordinates YT 136261. Loading the aircraft to the maximum, the Australians were extracted faster than the ground forces anticipated and a slight delay in additional arriving troops was experienced. The Command and Control helicopter received a report of light to moderate enemy fire being placed upon the troops at the jungle road landing zone, and of the near completion of the rotor blade replacement on the downed aircraft. Since this was the most critical extraction area, the helicopters were diverted to the 173rd (US) Airborne Brigade jungle

road position to complete the extraction of the Americans prior to dark. This extraction was completed at sunset. After the 173rd (US) Airborne Brigade troops had been extracted from their difficult position, the lift helicopters again returned to the Australian landing zone to complete this extraction. The last lift was completed at 1930 hours under the cover of darkness. During the entire operation the Command and Control helicopter was the focal point of the operation; selecting landing zones, coordinating and directing tactical air strikes against enemy positions and maintaining continuity and continuous responsive use of the lift helicopters. This was the fifth operation the 145th Aviation Battalion has completed during the hours of darkness in the past two months.

c. 9 December 1965: The 145th Aviation Battalion provided air movement for the 25th ARVN Infantry Division airmobile assault into two landing zones, 16 Km southwest of Duc Hoa, RVN. Armed helicopters of the 197th Aviation Company (Armed) received heavy automatic weapons fire on the initial reconnaissance of the landing zone with three aircraft receiving hits. The initial landing was delayed in order to direct additional air strikes in the vicinity of the landing zone. Initial tactical air targets were planned too far away from the immediate periphery of the landing zone and it was decided to extend this tactical air strike to insure neutralization of any enemy force in the vicinity of the landing zone prior to commitment of the airmobile force. The initial lift landed in the landing zone at 0920 hours. Light to moderate small arms and automatic weapons fire was received and three troop carriers received hits. No personnel were injured. The second landing zone was adjusted 400 meters east of the original landing zone to avoid enemy positions and ground fire. No fire was received during the second lift. Flight elements returned to Ben Luc for standby to airlift a reaction force into the operational area, on order. A preplanned extraction was not conducted and ground elements were removed from the operational area by the 22nd River Assault Group. The mission assigned to the Battalion to standby and airlift a reaction force on order is considered poor utilization of available aircraft resources. Commitment of a reaction force is in effect commitment of a reserve. Commitment of a reserve force is continually considered as a tactical situation develops, and should normally be known as far in advance as possible in order for reserve elements to be alerted, effect final coordination, move to contemplated departure points, and effect a counter attack against the enemy force. This, depending upon the size and level of unit control, would normally take a minimum of two hours. As of this time, after completing some 40-50 operations of this type; this battalion has never been required to lift a reaction force on a preplanned operation. This battalion is fully capable of reacting to any emergency or recall in less than two hours. Had this battalion and all of the assigned aircraft been released, subject to emergency recall, upon completion of the assigned operation many more hours of combat support could have been performed during the day.

d. 16 December 1965: In response to a tactical emergency the 145th Aviation Battalion effected a rapid reaction recall of battalion resources and assembled 24 troop carriers, 15 armed helicopters and supporting aircraft at the Baria airstrip. The 52nd ARVN Ranger Battalion (270 troops) made an airmobile assault from Baria into landing zone ALPHA (coordinates YS 610703). Two lifts were required to complete the assault. Armed helicopters from the 197th Aviation Company prestruck the landing zone with rocket

machine guns, and 40 MM grenades. Troop carriers used suppressive fire on final approach and during departure from the landing zone. The first lift touched down in the landing zone at 1510 hours and the last lift was completed at 1530 hours. Moderate small arms and automatic weapons fire was received by both flight elements during both lifts on departure from the landing zone. At the completion of the operation all aircraft were released and returned to assigned III Corps missions. The emergency recall was received by the Battalion Operations Center at 1230 hours and all required troop carriers, their armed escorts, and supporting helicopters were assembled at the Baria airstrip by 1400 hours.

e. 31 December 1965: The 145th Aviation Battalion provided troop carriers, armed helicopters and control aircraft for the ARVN Airborne Brigade's airmobile assault into three landing zones vicinity of Duc Hoa. Troop carriers and armed aircraft assembled at the Bien Hoa staging area (Snakepit) for final briefing and organization for combat. Enroute to the troop staging area at Duc Hoa the lift flight elements were alerted by the Command and Control helicopter to adjust enroute flight speed to compensate for the late arrival of tactical air. The first lift landed in landing zone DELTA, coordinates XT 328078, at 0800 hours and no hostile fire was received. The second lift landed in landing zone ALPHA, coordinates XT 272072, at 0940 hours; and heavy automatic weapons fire was received by all flight elements 250 meters north of the landing zone. One aviator from the 1st Aviation Battalion received a fatal wound during the approach into the landing zone. The aviator was not wearing a chest protector, which probably would have saved his life. Investigation revealed that chest protectors have not been made available to the 1st Aviation Battalion. The flight route to the third landing zone, LZ BRAVO, coordinates XT 278102, was rerouted by the Command and Control helicopter to avoid areas of hostile fire. No hostile fire was received during this lift. The fourth and last lift was to LZ CHARLIE, coordinates XT 312021; however, during the refueling operation, a reaction force of 800 Viet Cong was observed maneuvering to engage the troops that were air landed in LZ ALPHA. The ground force commander immediately directed the fourth lift be diverted from landing zone CHARLIE to LZ ALPHA. All flight elements again received ground fire from the vicinity of ALPHA. Tactical air was directed to strike the area and the hostile fire was neutralized. The last lift was completed at 1225 hours and all battalion aircraft were released to perform assigned III Corps missions.

f. The continued success of Lightning Bug missions was of particular significance. This offensive tactic was developed by the 197th Aviation Company (Armed) during the previous quarter to deny the use of rivers, canals, and roads to the Viet Cong during the hours of darkness. "Lightning Bug" missions consist of three to four armed helicopters, one of which has a cluster of high candlepower lights installed in the doorway with facilities built into the system to offer manual control of the lights. In addition, a 50 caliber machine gun is mounted in the door to provide high caliber suppressive fire in the target area. A fixed wing aircraft equipped with infrared radar makes the initial detection of targets and relays the target location via radio to the 197th Aviation Company operations. Upon arrival on station, the aircraft with the lights, illuminates the area and the armed helicopters destroy the target. "Lightning Bug" missions are utilized an average of six times a week.

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10. (C) Concept of Operations:

a. During the first portion of the reporting period the 145th Aviation Battalion continued its support of the Republic of Vietnam Army III Corps. On 24 November 1965, the Battalion was placed under the operational control of the 1st (US) Infantry Division and further assigned the mission of direct support of III ARVN Corps and the 173rd (US) Airborne Brigade. Occasionally aviation support is rendered to II and IV Vietnamese Army Corps areas when directed.

b. Flight mission assignments and requirements for III Corps are consolidated by the G-3 Aviation Advisor and submitted to 1st Infantry Division Army Aviation Control Center for approval. Once confirmation is made by the III Corps Army Aviation Element (AAE) that no requirements exist for Battalion aircraft other than III Corps missions, AAE assigns the requirements to the battalion through the Battalion Operation Center (BOC). BOC will then, commensurate with the number and type of aircraft each company has previously reported available for missions, determine the assignment of each mission and disseminates the information to each company. The battalion supports the 173rd (US) Airborne Brigade on Battalion size airmobile operations; otherwise the brigades organic aviation company provides combat aviation support.

c. Through the utilization of a Battalion Operation Center and by maintaining control over scheduling, the ability to provide III Corps with any size helicopter lift force can be accomplished rapidly. In the event a tactical emergency occurs and the commitment of troops by a combat assault is required, helicopters can be staged at any of the major staging areas in III Corps within two hours. This is accomplished by directing helicopters from low priority missions to report directly to the troop assembly area or to the helicopter staging area. The flexibility and rapid reaction capability of the airmobile force is further enhanced by the Battalion having prestocked fuel and ammunition at strategic locations throughout the III Corps area. In addition, contingency plans have been established with preselected landing zones throughout the Corps area to facilitate airmobile operations.

d. For the Aviation Battalion's planning, reference is made to size of operations by the number of troop carriers that are used. Airmobile operations of Battalion size are sixteen or more troop carriers. Fifteen troop carriers or less are coordinated and executed at company level. This Aviation Battalion also utilizes one armed escort helicopter for every two troop carrier aircraft. In addition one Command and Control helicopter for command purposes, one forward area maintenance recovery team, one recovery aircraft on standby at the staging area, one or two medical evacuation aircraft, five to eight armed reconnaissance helicopters for landing zone prestrike and marking, and one to two C-119's for radio relay, weather advisor, and surveillance are required to complete the Battalion Task Organization for airmobile operations.

11. (C) Newly Assigned and Reassigned Units:

a. The 6th Airlift Platoon was assigned to the 145th Aviation Battalion on 5 October 1965 and attached to the 120th Aviation Company located at Tan Son Nhut. On 1 December 1965 the 6th Airlift Platoon was

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detached from the 120th Aviation Company and attached to A Company, 401st Aviation Battalion located at Bien Hoa.

b. A Company, 82nd Aviation Battalion stationed at Vung Tau, RVN was reassigned from this Battalion and assigned to the 173rd (US) Airborne Brigade effective 24 October 1965.

c. On 13 November 1965 the advance party of the 68th Aviation Company arrived in-country and was assigned to the 145th Aviation Battalion. The 68th Aviation Company was stationed at Vung Tau and organic equipment and personnel arrived at that location on 16 and 29 November 1965 respectively. The 68th Aviation Company became operational 11 December 1965.

12. Personnel:

a. During the previous quarter, the following personnel shortages were classified as critical:

| <u>POS</u> | <u>AUTH</u> | <u>ACTUAL</u> | <u>SHORT</u> |
|--------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| 05C RTT Operator | 12 | 6 | 6 |
| 11B Lt Wpns Inf | 187 | 181 | 6 |
| 11D Armor Intel Spec | 33 | 28 | 5 |
| 31B Inf Radio Tech | 12 | 11 | 1 |
| 31Q Avionics Rep | 78 | 60 | 18 |
| 36A Wireman | 16 | 10 | 6 |
| 45J Acft Arm Rpm | 26 | 18 | 7 |
| 51M Fire Fighter | 13 | 9 | 4 |
| 52E Power Plnt Op & Mech | 12 | 7 | 5 |
| 56C Petro Strg Spec | 30 | 21 | 9 |
| 63B Wh Veh Tech | 35 | 28 | 7 |
| 67A Acft Maint Crwmn | 67 | 64 | 3 |
| 67D Single Eng Mech | 16 | 12 | 4 |
| 67N Crow Chief | 407 | 397 | 10 |
| 67W Tech Insp | 17 | 16 | 1 |
| 68A Acft Comp Rep App | 13 | 8 | 5 |
| 68B Acft Eng Rep | 29 | 19 | 10 |
| 68D Acft Partrain Tech | 11 | 10 | 1 |
| 68F Acft Elec | 13 | 9 | 4 |
| 68G Airframe Rpm | 37 | 31 | 6 |
| 71A Clerk | 13 | 11 | 2 |
| 71B Clerk Typist | 35 | 29 | 6 |
| 71P Flt Opns Coord | 12 | 11 | 1 |
| 76G Sig Sup & Parts Spec | 8 | 4 | 4 |
| 76H Trans Sup & Parts Sp | 28 | 21 | 6 |
| 76K Gen Sup Spec | 13 | 12 | 1 |

13. (C) Intelligence:

a. During the previous quarter, continued emphasis was placed on security against possible attempts of Viet Cong suicide squads to infiltrate air bases and damage or destroy aircraft.

b. Actual hit reports of aircraft in the 145th Aviation Battalion decreased during the quarter, but the reports of automatic weapons fire against aircraft increased. Two reports have been received of ground to air fire by rockets or other projectiles trailing white smoke.

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c. The change to the dry season in early November has improved flying conditions. Only two battalion airmobile operations were delayed up to one hour due to ground fog and none had to be cancelled due to weather.

d. The 145th Aviation Battalion does not have an organic camera or photographic developing capability, and photograph requests thru DASC, III Corps are always too late for use in operations. Coordination is continuing with the 73rd Aviation Company and 1st US Infantry Division, G2 Air to obtain timely photographs for airmobile operations.

14. (C) Logistics:

Refueling Operations: Time phasing of a multiple lift Battalion size operation is somewhat dependent upon the time required for refueling of the helicopters. Whenever the refueling operations were conducted at a location with limited refueling equipment, considerable delay of subsequent lifts was experienced. To alleviate this problem, the Battalion instituted a method of rapid refueling of helicopters by utilizing portable 500 gallon bladders and 50 GPM light weight pumps. Sufficient bladders and pumps are prepositioned at a predesignated refueling site and 5 stations with 20 refueling points are set up. Helicopters can be refueled by flight elements. Helicopters do not shut down for refueling, but reduce engine speed to flight idle position. Battery switch, radios, and inverters are turned off during refueling. The Battalion has successfully utilized this method of refueling on 3 different occasions with as much as 40,000 gallons of fuel dispensed during a single operation. The principle advantage of the rapid refueling method is that it can be conducted at any site suitable for landing a formation of helicopters. The major disadvantage is prepositioning of portable 500 gallon bladders in time to effect this method of refueling. Approximately 4 CH-47 helicopters are required to preposition bladders for a Battalion operation of 60 troop carriers, 30 armed, and 5 supporting aircraft.

15. (C) Communications:

a. During the quarter the Communication Section of the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment supported the 145th Aviation Battalion with UHF and FM radio support and limited wire communications. A VRC-24 UHF radio was utilized at the battalion rear and forward command posts for UHF air to ground communications. The VRC-24 is not a suitable radio for forward command posts because of its power requirements. Efforts to obtain the battery powered back pack FRC-41 have been unsuccessful due to non-availability of the item.

b. FM communication equipment has been adequate, but the frequency interference on all assigned battalion FM frequencies has been a tremendous problem. Letters to U.S. Army Vietnam Signal Officer have not resulted in any relief from interference by 1st Infantry Division units which are operating on 145th Aviation Battalion assigned FM frequencies. Each Aviation Battalion and Company must have an assigned, interference free FM frequency.

c. The shortage of highly portable UHF radios and the interference from American units on assigned Battalion FM frequencies are the only two major communications problems encountered by the 145th Aviation Battalion during this quarter.

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16. (U) Aviation Safety:

a. The 145th Aviation Battalion flew 26,081 hours during this quarter and experienced two (2) losses due to enemy action, three (3) precautionary landings, four (4) forced landings, seven (7) incidents, and ten (10) major accidents.

b. To date the 145th Aviation Battalion accident rate is 20.1 as measured against a USARV rate of 29.1 per 100,000 flying hours.

c. The battalion has no immediate problem areas in the field of aviation safety. A thorough, comprehensive pilot education and standardization training program, is being conducted and has been successful in reducing the accident rate.

SECTION II: COMMANDERS COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. (C) Table of Organization and Equipment:

a. In May 1965, Headquarters, United States Army Support Command Vietnam, forwarded to Department of the Army a Troop Unit Change Request (TUCR) requesting that the four (4) Aviation Battalions within USASCV be reorganized to reflect a standard organization. All spaces requested in this correspondence had been fully justified in prior requests with the exception of the pathfinder detachment.

b. In the past, by evolution and escalation of US Aviation units into the Republic of Vietnam the Battalion Headquarters has been tailored to meet the requirements of location and mission. At present, current battalion strengths vary from 80 to 111 spaces, with generally the same number of types of units assigned to those airmobile battalions. They should be organized into identical units, and in addition, should be further studied by Department of the Army with the view of adopting a permanent structure to meet the requirements of the counterinsurgency environment.

c. The present structure of this Battalion is based on TC&E 1-76E 1963, W/C-1 as augmented by General Order 312, Headquarters, USARPAC, dated 25 October 1965. This general order is the reply to the TUCR that was submitted by USASCV requesting that the four (4) battalions, then assigned to that headquarters, be reorganized. The results of this TUCR are extremely difficult to understand. Although the request was submitted in one consolidated piece of correspondence, the reply and augmentation has returned to Vietnam in shot gun fashion. On 20 August 1965, the 13th Aviation Battalion was reorganized by General Order 264, Headquarters, USARPAC authorizing the 13th Aviation Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment a strength of 22 Officers, 2 Warrant Officers and 87 enlisted men for an aggregate strength of 111 spaces. The 145th Aviation Battalion, however, on the same request to Department of the Army, and although a battalion with similar units and mission was reorganized 65 days later and only authorized 15 Officers, 2 Warrant Officers, and 64 enlisted men.

d. This Battalion is critically short the necessary personnel and equipment to act as pathfinders on airmobile assaults and extractions. The augmentation of a pathfinder detachment is considered essential to enhance

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this units combat support role. Apparently, there has been complete disregard for this battalion's request for such an organization.

c. Recommend the 145th Aviation Battalion TOW TUCR, dated 26 May 1965, recommending assignment of a pathfinder detachment, be approved.

2. (C) Army Aviation Liaison Officers:

a. This Battalion is responsible for providing four Army Aviation Liaison Officers in the III Corps area. The primary duty of liaison officers, in addition to representing the battalion, is to function as the Corps and Division Army Aviation Element. This Battalion does not have the capability to provide rated personnel for this additional task without taking personnel from an assigned company. This in turn withholds these vital and necessary personnel from company operations. The respective Aviation Elements are extremely important since a major phase of all ground operations is the Army Aviation support.

b. Recommend the 145th Aviation Battalion TOW TUCR, dated 26 May 1965, recommending augmentation of Army Aviation Liaison Officers be approved.

3. (C) Requirement for Battalion Headquarters Aircraft:

a. Under the present TOW structure aircraft are not authorized for Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment. The 145th Aviation Battalion experience with combat airmobile operations indicates a vital need for a minimum of three helicopters to be assigned to this detachment. A request has been forwarded to higher Headquarters for the addition of these aircraft.

b. During the quarter, the 145th Aviation Battalion averaged one battalion size operation every other day. Prior to each of these operations, the Battalion Command and Control helicopter has been utilized extensively for command, liaison, reconnaissance flights, and later for control of operations. In essence, each day the helicopter is used for controlling a combat airmobile operation, or for planning subsequent operations.

c. On all Battalion size operations, command post facilities are established at the initial stagefield. As the operation progresses, it is often necessary to change the location of the Command Post to a secondary or auxiliary stage field. Due to the insurgency situation that exists and the rapid deployment of helicopters, this relocation must be done by helicopter. In addition, the pathfinder detachment must precede the arrival of the lift force in order to prepare troops for loading, and to determine parking and landing areas.

d. Another major function, always requiring a staff support helicopter is logistics support; the sustaining factor in all battalion operations. Because of the limited, permanent refueling capability in III Corps, fuel pumps and the operative personnel must be flown from stagefield to stagefield. During extended field operations, the logistics function becomes even more demanding of transportation needs.

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c. Recommend three UH-1 helicopters be assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment for staff support. In addition, it is requested that Headquarters, Department of the Army immediately review and fully investigate the recommended troop unit change requests that have been submitted by the combat experienced Aviation Battalions in the field, to insure our organization is tailored to fit the counterinsurgency environment.

4. (C) TDY Aircraft:

a. One armed platoon from the 197th Aviation Company is on TDY to the II ARVN Corps area to support the HFV#363 Marine Helicopter Squadron located at Qui Nhon. This support became effective 28 September 1965, and has been continuous throughout the Quarter. The loss of the armed platoon has greatly reduced the Armed helicopter capability of the Battalion to adequately support III Corps airmobile operations and the many US and ARVN ground combat operations which have occurred during this Quarter.

b. Recommend that the armed platoon from the 197th Aviation Company presently on TDY at Qui Nhon be returned to this command at the earliest practicable date. ✓

Charles M. Honour, Jr.
CHARLES M. HONOUR, JR.
Lt Colonel Infantry
Commanding

CONFIDENTIAL

145th Avn
CONFIDENTIAL

AVAW-SC (14 Jan 66)

1st Ind

SUBJECT: Command Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 December 1965
RCS CSGPO-28 (RI)

HEADQUARTERS, 12TH AVIATION GROUP, APO San Francisco 96307

TO: Commanding General, ATTN: AVC, United States Army Vietnam, APO
US Forces 96307

1. (U) Concur with the recommendations of the Commanding Officer,
145th Aviation Battalion.

2. (C) Personnel shortages in critical MOS's have been placed on
special requisition to USARV. Assignments are made as replacements arrive.

3. (U) A proposed MTOE for an Aviation Battalion Headquarters has
been forwarded to each Battalion for comments. The proposed MTOE would
provide a strength of 25 Officers, 2 Warrant Officers and 93 Enlisted
personnel for an aggregate of 120. Provisions have been made for a Path-
finder Detachment and Aviation Liaison Officers.

4. (U) To provide the Battalion Headquarters with necessary command
and control aircraft during the conduct of airmobile operations, three (3)
UH-1 helicopters will be incorporated in the MTOE.

5. (C) The armed platoon presently in support of HMM 363 Marine
Helicopter Squadron will be released on 23 January 1966.

Raymond G Jones
RAYMOND G JONES
Colonel, Arty
Commanding

CONFIDENTIAL

GROUP — 4

Downgraded at 3 year intervals:
Declassified after 12 years.

CONFIDENTIAL

AVC (14 Jan 66)

2d Ind

SUBJECT: Command Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 December 1965,
Report Control Symbol CSGPO-28 (R1) (U)

Headquarters, United States Army, Vietnam, APO US Forces 96307 02 FEB 1966

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-MH,
APO US Forces 96558

1. (U) Reference Section II, Commander's Comments and Recommendations.
2. (C) Reference paragraphs 1 and 2: General Order 312, Headquarters USARPAC, 25 October 1965, augmenting the 145th Aviation Battalion, completed the action on the TUCR dated 26 May 1965. This did not provide the desired organization. As indicated in paragraph 3, 1st Indorsement, the 12th Aviation Group is preparing a Modification Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) to provide common structure for each aviation battalion. The MTOE includes pathfinder detachments and aviation liaison officers for the battalion.
3. (U) Reference paragraph 3: See paragraph 4, 1st Indorsement. Also, one UH-1B and one U-6 aircraft from USARV assets have been on loan to the 145th Aviation Battalion, pending submission of the MTOE described in paragraph 2, above.
4. (U) Reference paragraph 4: See paragraph 5, 1st Indorsement.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Henry L. Denney

HENRY L. DENNEY
CWO, USA
Asst Adjutant General

CONFIDENTIAL

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS
DOD DIR 5200.10

2-6

CONFIDENTIAL

AVC (14 Jan 66)

2d Ind

SUBJECT: Command Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 December 1965,
Report Control Symbol CSGPO-28 (R1) (U)

Headquarters, United States Army, Vietnam, APO US Forces 96307 02 FEB 1966

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APO US Forces 96558

1. (U) Reference Section II, Commander's Comments and Recommendations.
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4. (U) Reference paragraph 4: See paragraph 5, 1st Indorsement.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Henry L. Denney

HENRY L. DENNEY
CWO, USA
Asst Adjutant General

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2-6